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Contras are a beaten lot, says analyst

United Press International

WASHINGTON — A former CIA analyst says that the contras have already been defeated by the Nicaraguan government and that any more U.S. aid to the rebels will only antagonize other Latin American nations.

David MacMichael, a former Marine Corps officer and CIA analyst, today released a report on the contras that he said was discarded by the Reagan administration.

The release of the report comes on the heels of last night's nationally broadcast speech by President Reagan aimed at creating public pressure on Congress to approve \$100 million in military and non-lethal aid to the contras, who are trying to overthrow Nicaragua's Sandinista government.

In his report, based on a four-week trip to Nicaragua between Jan. 31 and March 3, MacMichael said the contras inside Nicaragua "have been chopped into small groups by persistent and remorseless government offensives."

He said that the Nicaraguan system of universal military conscription and clearing border areas of local population had been effective and that the Sandinista claim of having won a strategic victory over the insurgents was correct.

MacMichael's report lists eight Latin American leaders, including Colombian President Belisario Betancur, as having told the Reagan administration that military aid to the contras was "a bad idea" because it would indicate that the United States had rejected a diplomatic solution in the region.

MacMichael estimated that there were no more than 2,500 contras inside Nicaragua. Administration officials said recently that the contra forces numbered up to 20,000, with a large proportion of them controlling chunks of Nicaraguan territory.

MacMichael's report argues that the contras have lost and that further aid to them will be fruitless.

"It is one thing to fund an enterprise, no matter how seamy or illegal, that promises quick success and quite another to be asked to finance indefinitely a project teetering on the brink of fiasco in the hope that it might recover," he said.

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